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Photofun

Wave 2-7-85

by Karl Peterson

Snow and cold weather can cause problems for photographers, especially those of us who like to get outdoors and photograph the unique scenery that winter brings. In spite of the weather some beautiful shots can be taken if we take the precautions that seem to be necessary this time of year.

The advent of current photo technology has placed a battery or two in almost every camera made and created a dependency on electrical energy in order to operate. This has proved to be a boon for photographers but has, at times, raised havoc when shooting in cold weather. When venturing outdoors then it is a good idea to keep your camera as warm as possible. The best way to do this is to hang it around

your neck and zip it inside your coat or parka, taking it out to shoot and the zipping it up again. Under all but the most severe conditions this should keep your batteries warm enough to provide metering, shutter release, and film advance. Just this simple step can mean the difference between getting the photo or a camera that won't work.

Another thing to avoid is blowing on the lens or viewfinder to clear them of that speck of dust that always seems to appear. Doing so will only put a coating of frost on the glass surface you meant to clean. Far better to carry a lens cleaning brush and use it to remove any specks or dirt.

One other item in the line of cold weather maintenance is the removal of snow from the camera, If we do get snow on it it seems to be the natural thing to just wipe it off with either our hand or a cloth, Carry a shaving

or small paint brush and just brush it off. This will prevent smearing up the camera.

Lets assume though that it is a beautiful, clear winter day. Not a

cloud in the sky and the sunlight makes the snow sparkle. How many times have you taken pictures under such conditions only to have them lack the sparkle and brilliance you wanted to preserve? The problem lies in the exposure meter, either the one on our camera or a seperate one.

Any meter measures light and either sets or recommends an exposure based on an average level of illumination. Snow on a bright day is not an average level of illumination. I won't explain how or why here, but under such conditions your meter will indicate a setting that will underexpose the scene one or two stops, resulting in a photo that is darker than what you had visualized.

The cure for this is to override your meter and give one or two stops more exposure. Either shoot at the next slowest shutter speed or open up the lens another stop, i.e., from f8 to f5.6. In the case of an automatic camera set the ASA/ISO indicator at either half or one quarter the recommended film speed.

Finally, take several shots at different exposure settings. Don't be afraid to use a little film in order to get the image you want.

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Wave 21 Feb 1985

by Karl Peterson

Last week our discussion of there are many photographic subjects that, for one reason or another, do not fall in the so called "average" category. In graphs often do not turn out as some hints on how to measure exposure measurement and metering illustrated the fact that situations like this our photowell as they could. Herewith exposure more effectively and produce better photos.

ction is the light coming from? What kind of light is it, bright casting well defined shadows, or to other elements in the scene. In other words if a subject grabs vourself to making an image, then it is, worth the receive the most emphasis. How does the light affect it as opposed your attention to the extent that them, tend to get in too big a time. Sit back and closely soft and diffuse creating more even illumination? Determine the primary subject that will they see a scene that excites hurry to shoot. The best advice in a situation like this is to take your observe the scene. What dire-Many photographers, when you commit

to produce the best photographic time taken to observe it in order rendering possible.

ing up to it, filling the frame with one, take a closeup reading of the the subject, and making the reading. Note where this reading subject and determine the best posure reading and make note of it. Then, using your camera's meter or a separate hand held main subject. This means walkfalls in relation to the overall After studying a scene and phasize, it is time to meter the exposure. Take an overall exdeciding what element to em-

if the range between the brightest and the darkest parts of the overall brightness ratio of a promises in our exposure in order to produce the best those portions will be either under or overexposed. This is why it is so important to move in with your meter and determine scene. After doing so we sometimes have to make comlatitude for Iside. In other words a scene exceeds these latitudes. or print, film and five stops scene, noting their relationship there is an exposure latitude of Meter other elements in the around seven stops for negative. to one another. Bear in mind that reading you took first.

results. A good rule of thumb in this regard is to meter for the highlights, or brightest parts, or a scene when using slide, or transparency film, and to meter the shadows when using negrendition of the primary subject.

approach a scene close enough to have to make a substitute approximates the elements in the distant scnee. Two items can be we would like. In this case we reading of something that used, one of which we all have, and the other. I strongly suggest take the selective meter readings vou acquire.

on the distant scene and take your meter reading from it. Make sure that the card fills the viewfinder and that you are measuring only the light re-The item you should get is an 8 percent gray card available in any good camera shop. This card reflects 18 percent of the light falling on it, the same amount as our "average" scene. Place this card in the same light as is falling flected from it.

stop. In other words if the palm reading shows f11 at 1/125 then again being careful that it is placed in the same light falling stop more light than gray card so note the reading, and then increase your exposure by one shoot at f8 at 1/125 or f11 at on the subject. The human palm will reflect approximately one Finally, if no gray card is available, take a meter reading from the palm of your hand, once

the palm of your hand. I think you'll be pleased with the camera. Try these metering techniques. Experiment with automatic features in your them, metering for highlights and shadows, using a gray and Don't be slaves to all the

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